



Founded 1926

HISTORY WEST

PUBLISHED BY THE ROYAL WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

November 2019

GENERAL MEETING

The next meeting at Stirling House is on Wednesday 20 November at 6pm when E/Prof. Jenny Gregory will present a paper on ‘Commemorating milestones in Western Australian history’. Refreshments available from 5.30pm; Bookshop open until 6pm.



The year 2029 will be the bicentenary of the European colonisation of Western Australia. In just a decade we will commemorate Captain Stirling’s arrival and the establishment of the Swan River Colony on 1 June 1829. The spotlight will once again be turned on history, just as it was when Western Australians celebrated the sesquicentenary in 1979, the centenary in 1929 and the jubilee in 1879. How did we celebrate each of these milestones?

Are there complications of which we should be aware? Leaving aside Albany’s foundation as a NSW garrison in 1826, there are a range of ideas that underlie any commemoration. Celebrating beginnings imposes a particular interpretation of the past, as we shall see from examples of the way earlier generations chose to celebrate Western Australia’s foundation. Each generation brought new memories and understandings that built on and replaced the old. Recollection of the past is an active, constructive process, in which our collective memory reconstructs the past according to the beliefs and needs of the present. How then might we commemorate the bicentenary of Western Australia’s foundation in 2029?

Jenny Gregory AM, FRHS, is Emeritus Professor of History at The University of Western Australia. She has published widely on aspects of urban history and heritage. Amongst her best known books are the *Historical Encyclopedia of Western Australia* and *City of Light: a history of Perth since the fifties*. She is currently President of the History Council of WA and a member of the National Trust Council and the UWA Convocation Council.



Lilburne Print Sale

Congratulations to Pamela and Nick Drew and their team of helpers for the hard work and commitment over many months to achieve a wonderful success at the print sale. The income generated will greatly assist the Society’s 2019 budget bottom line.

We are delighted to report to members that in total the print sale raised approximately \$8,000.

The team arrived at Stirling House with thirteen cases full to bursting with prints and took seven home empty at the close. Our next opportunity to sell the prints will be at the Antiques & Collectables Market at the Claremont Showgrounds on Saturday and Sunday 9-10 November.

Many thanks to all volunteers who helped, especially Lorraine Clarke, Barbara and Dave Melvin, and Sue Clarke, not to forget our new President, Steve Errington, who came to cheer us on, on both Friday and Saturday, and the Beresford Peirses who helped with the set up.

Pamela & Nick Drew



Council News

At its meeting held on 10 October business included the following where Council

• welcomed new members – Judy Clayden, Mary Graham, Cate Pattison and Colin Strickland

- elected president Steve Errington and treasurer Lorraine Clarke as chair and vice chair respectively
- invited Daniel Ranshaw to attend all Council meetings with the right to speak, prior to taking office as secretary in May
- co-opted Fiona Keating to be a member of Council
- adopted a letterhead design based on the Society's trading name 'History West'
- noted with pleasure that over \$12,000 had been raised so far from the sale of Lilburne items
- welcomed plans for a new museum display
- expressed its appreciation of Lennie McCall's 21 consecutive years of dedicated service as chairperson of Council.

Steve Errington chairperson

A Letter to the Editor

Every so often History West receives a written response from readers, sometimes to point out an error, sometimes to compliment the team. Below is a letter that we want to share with you all because it reflects further on the question Phil Bianchi raised in his article in September's History West on A W Canning – Can we be sure about the past?

Dr Nan Broad writes from Port Denison.

I wish to commend you and your associates for the interesting and informative content appearing in the recent issues of *History West*. Research and preservation being the aims of the Society, it is gratifying to read of the varied threads of local history which members are pursuing.

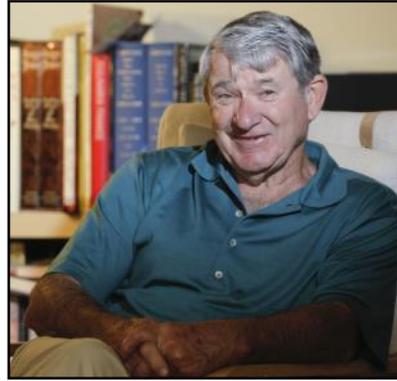
I particularly note Phil Bianchi's résumé of his publication *Work Completed. A Comprehensive History of the Canning Stock Route 1906-2010* which calls for an unbiased approach to understanding historic facts in their temporal setting.

I am currently transcribing the diaries of Major Logue, pioneer settler at Ellendale on the Greenough River, written from 1850 to 1900. Colonisation is confronting at best and war at worst but remains part of the fabric of the era and, moreover, has been practised in all countries at one time or another. Historians need to reinforce acceptance of the facts, brutal as they may have been.

From 1983 to 1986 I enjoyed an active involvement on the Society's Council and convened the Memorials Committee.

N M Broad (Dr)

Vale David Hough



Courtesy Post newspapers

The Society says a sad farewell to member and historian Dr David Hough who spoke last to members at our June general meeting.

David's address four months ago about dramatic aviation incidents in the Kimberley between 1942 and 1971 drew on research for his most recent book, *A Man of His Time*, a biography of Robert Mitford Rowell, a pioneer of business in the far north. His earlier historical books included *A Dream of Passion*, about His Majesty's Theatre, and *Boans for Service*, about what was arguably Perth's most famous department store.

Among David's loves were dance and travel. Four days before his death he had returned from a holiday in Europe, and family and friends were shocked by the news of his sudden death, which came only hours after he attended a book launch in West Perth.

Patrick Cornish

History in the City

Roger Underwood gave our talk on 2 October; it concerned 'Railway Pies', the story of a railway icon and one of the most distinctive aspects of early railway travel in WA. By the 1930s, the buying of a railway pie was an important part of the journey. They were steak pies usually with onion and were available from railway refreshment rooms or from mobile vendors carrying a large tray. Many of the audience remembered the important part the pie played in early railway journeys. It has become part of our history and it was interesting to hear that some tiny railway stations, now long gone, were part of this history. It was amazing to hear of the large number of railway lines and stops where pies were available for passengers and train staff. Many in the audience had tales to tell of nearly missing the train and also how welcome it was to be able to leave the train to buy their pie. The railway pie is very much part of our history.

History in the City is held on the first Wednesday of each month from March to December. Our next talk will be on Wednesday 4 December and given by Linda J Bettenay on The Importance of Historical Fiction in Bringing History to a Wider Audience.

Lorraine Tholet

Hon. R D (Bob) Nicholson

President's Report - AGM 18 September 2019

Thanks and good wishes to our President who ended his term in office at this year's AGM with a report highlighting the Society's ongoing role and its current circumstances. In addition to thanking everyone who worked for the Society's benefit during his term of office, he reflected as follows.

The Constitution defines the philosophy of the Society in its object provisions. Above all, the Society is a not-for-profit body. Its object is 'to encourage the study, writing and enjoyment of the history of Western Australia in all its cultural diversity.' We have not deviated from that philosophy. However, we need to recognise that the world around us of museums and galleries has changed greatly. We are all aware of the immense capitalisation of the WA Museum supporting the erection of its vast new premises. We are also aware of the impact of digitisation on the means of reproduction of the holdings of both galleries and museums. These are developments from which we cannot remain aloof. The vastly enriched Museum will be presenting exhibitions interpreting the history of Western Australia. We need to be able to do the same and to have the space to do so. The Museum will be able to assist non-Perth museums more than it has been able to in the past.

Likewise we need to have a stronger relationship with our Affiliates throughout the State. Interchange of exhibits and education in issues facing museums are but two examples of where future development can occur.

One of our strengths and points of appeal to Western Australians is that we are a non-government organisation. We do not have changes in government policy affecting us directly. We are armed for our work by a large army of volunteers. This is an occasion to recognise them and to thank them for all they undertake at various levels.

Our philosophy is sound but we will need to constantly give it publicity so that it remains among the institutions of meaning to the public.

For some time the Department of Culture and the Arts (as it was then described) gave us a small grant annually out of which we were able to engage an executive officer. In recent times that source of income has been curtailed. Our income from our membership allows us to operate with a deficit each year of around \$50 000. So one policy we cannot avoid is that we need to raise the income we receive. We are presently doing this by an increase in the number of our functions and presentations. But that is not a guarantee of the future. We hold the view that government should be prepared to stimulate organisations working in culture and arts in the near future. There is, however, no guarantee of success.

One other thing we have done is to prepare and issue a bequest brochure. You will see this shortly. If you are in the position to assist the Society in the future through the making of a bequest, it would be of considerable assistance to our cause.

Last year in my report I stressed the importance of the work of the Council through its committee examining how we utilise this site. Our present building is simply not capable of meeting our needs now and most certainly cannot meet them for the next half century. I am deeply impressed by all the work of the committee examining these issues. They have been planning in a time of changed economic circumstances. All the issues are not yet at rest. But we are well informed on where we should go. In particular, our engagement of member Peter Farr to prepare a business assessment of all we have in mind has been of very great significance. He has made it clear to us that if we can achieve bringing a new building into existence on this site we must also realise that we have to lift our game another notch to maintain and utilise such a facility. In my opinion, there is no alternative ahead: we simply have to do these things.

* * * * *



Representing the RWAHS at Kalamunda HS's 50th celebration

Library News - Additions to the collection

Diaries from Arthur River and Williams

Member Louise Higham has kindly donated two sets of farm diaries, together with notes about their writers, to the Society. These are welcome additions to our collection because farming life is such an important part of Western Australian history and one where we don't hold much material. Our grateful thanks to Louise for her donation.

Diaries of Thomas and Ethel Sharp 1904-1917

Louise is the author of *On active service: a biographical dictionary of Williams* (2016) and also the granddaughter of Thomas Sharp. The diaries of Thomas and Ethel Sharp are photocopies, used by the author when researching her book. The location of the originals is not known.

The diaries cover the years 1904 to 1917 although there are gaps in the record. They are rare because they record the daily struggle to create a viable farm from bush with virtually no capital, and give an insight into the hard grind of life for settlers on their 160-acre homestead blocks. The diary also mentions other early settlers of the Williams/ Tarwonga district.

Thomas James Sharp was born on 23 May 1882 at Orroroo, South Australia. The diary begins in South Australia from where in June-July 1905 the Sharps journeyed by sea to Albany, travelling by train to Narrogin, by horse and cart to Williams, and from there a few kilometres in a southerly direction to their block near Tarwonga.

In their early days Thomas earned cash by stripping bark from the Mallet trees, from which tannin was extracted. It was found to be more suitable than any other bark or gum used at the time for tanning leather. This bark was a good source of income for settlers while their land was being cleared and fenced for running stock. Ethel made her contribution to their income by selling dairy produce.

The diaries from 1904-1913 were written by Thomas Sharp. The handwriting and brevity of the record of farm activities emphasise the relentless pressure of work. He clearly had little time or energy left after a farming day for other necessary tasks, such as record-keeping. We read often monosyllabic entries, day after day, such as 'Ploughing', 'Carting hay', and so on.

The 1913 diary shows that Ethel has become the record keeper and the style and content of entries change completely. Her entries are clearly written, and much more discursive and informative. She provides information about herself, their social life and their neighbours, as well as details of their farm operations.

Ethel records her dairy produce enterprise and details of sales. On one particular day she sold 7 pints of milk and a glass of cream, from which she made 9 shillings and 8 pence. Eventually, she was selling considerable quantities of milk and other dairy products, including butter, for greater returns.

Ethel's last entry was for Monday 30 July 1917 and records a normal uneventful day. A little over a month later on 19 September, Thomas Sharp wrote: 'I am writing in this column as my dear Ethel passed away today at about 3.30 pm. T. J. Sharp.'

Earlier diary entries give details of Ethel's operation

for the removal of gallstones, however she appears to recover from this event. What led to her sudden death cannot be found in the diaries.

Thomas' sad note ends our set of Sharp diaries, but we know a little more of what happened to this family. In 1926 Thomas Sharp married again to Welsh-born Eleanor Day. She was a widow, whose former husband, John Day, committed suicide by strychnine poisoning in May 1926. The Days' block at Dardadine was infested with poison bush and 'it had been known that he had considerable worries'. Thomas and Eleanor had one son, Claude Morris, born in 1928.

Thomas James Sharp died on 8 July 1962, while Eleanor died on 3 September 1980. In 1950 Claude Sharp married June Margaret Martin, only daughter of L R Martin, of 'Coalling', Williams. The Martin Family were pioneers of the Williams District and their descendants continue to farm the original land holding.

The Leggoe Diaries: 1949-51, 1953-55, 1960-63

This second set of farm diaries was also unearthed while Louise was researching her book. It is more contemporary, covering ten of the fifteen years from 1949 to 1963, and belonging to John Leggoe (1909-2003). These diaries supplement a number of items the Society already holds by John Leggoe. (See below)

Leggoe served in the RANVR during World War II. In 1943 he joined the *Patricia Cam*, a motor vessel requisitioned as an auxiliary minesweeper, as her First Lieutenant. He describes the *Patricia Cam* as 'nothing more than a vast wooden hold with an engine room aft'. On 22 January 1943 the ship was heading for Elcho Island in the Arafura Sea when it was bombed by Japan and sunk. The survivors, including Leggoe, managed to reach a small rocky islet about two miles west of Cumberland Strait, lying between the two main Wessel Islands. They were rescued a week later and John Leggoe's war exploits can be found in his book *Trying to be sailors*.

John Leggoe took up a War Service Land Settlement Scheme farm at Arthur River in 1949 and farmed there until the farm was sold in 1966. He represented war service farmers for a decade in disputes with the state government over land valuations and submitted a report to the WA Parliament on the scheme's deficiencies. John married Evaline ('Toffee') Parker and they had two daughters, Margaret and Judy.

The simple records in the Sharp diaries contrast with those in the Leggoe diaries. The latter were recorded in volumes titled 'The Landsman's Account Book and Diary'. The format prompted the recorder to provide details of all the things which were important to a farming enterprise — date, weather, regular farming operations, general reminders of all kinds. Leggoe kept records of payment to employees, many accounts and notes of the general state of stock and sale figures. He used the general reminder column to talk about family and social matters, including a list of people to whom they sent Christmas cards. The result provides a clear picture of life on a farm and the family's social interaction with neighbours and the community of Arthur River.

Jill Maughan, Hon Librarian

For more on John Leggoe in the library, see *Trying to be sailors* (1983), *So harsh the land: a factual narrative based on the lives of actual people* (unpublished, 1992), and *Memoirs: an autobiography* (unpublished, 1992).

Museum News

The Ladies Loton

Last month's issue of *History West* described family items donated to the Society by Harold Loton and, in particular, details of two prominent Loton men who were knighted — Sir William Thorley Loton and Sir Ernest Thorley Loton. This article explores the lives of their wives.

Lady Annie (Bonnie) Loton (née Morris) 1836-1927

One of the many family items donated to the Society by Harold Loton is a leather-covered locket containing a gold-framed picture of his great-grandmother Annie (Bonnie) Loton. Bonnie presented this locket to her future husband William Thorley Loton on his departure for Western Australia on the *Strathmore* in 1862. She followed William to the colony, arriving in December 1863, and the two were married in Perth's St George's Cathedral in February 1868.



In his book *Beyond the Stirling Tree*, Harold Loton writes that Bonnie's mother Priscilla Morris inherited substantial monies that she decided to invest in her only daughter and future son-in-law William. Bonnie was a well-educated woman who began as an assistant teacher when only 15 years old and became a qualified teacher at 18. At 19 years of age, Bonnie was hired by the Loton family to tutor 16-year-old William Thorley Loton who had left school at 14 and was working as an apprentice draper. The two obviously developed a close relationship, and Bonnie together with her mother Priscilla played a significant role not only in William's education but also in his future as a successful business and political figure in Western Australia. When William, Bonnie and their children visited England in 1874, Priscilla returned to WA with them.



Bonnie and William's wedding. P1999.1695

The family lived at 46 St George's Tce until 1897 when they moved to 'Dilhorn', a new house designed by architect J J Talbot Hobbs in Federation Queen Anne style. The name Dilhorn is believed to be a reference to Loton's home town of Dilhorne in

Staffordshire UK. The house still stands today at the corner of Bulwer and Lord Streets, East Perth. In the Lotons' day it was a grand family home, incorporating servants' quarters and various entrances. Staff would likely have included a cook, two maids and a chauffeur. The palm tree in the front yard is believed to have been planted during World War I. The family also spent much time at their country homes at 'Belvoir', Upper Swan, and 'Springhill' in Northam.

Sir William Loton died in 1924 and Lady Loton three years later. Dilhorn was sold and became a boarding house until 1940. It was then in private hands until 1952 when it was purchased by the Commonwealth Department of Defence and occupied as Army Headquarters for the 13th Infantry Brigade (1952-1960), the 1st Royal Western Australia Regiment Battle Group (1960-1965), the 2nd Task Force (1965-1976), the Army Museum and the 5th Military District Detachment of the 4th Army Quality Assurance Unit (1978-1988), then solely by the Army Museum (1988-1995). It has been in private hands since 1995 and has been renovated several times.

Lady Grace May Loton (née Smith) 1899-1993



Grace and Thorley's wedding. P1987.244FP

Grace married William and Bonnie's grandson Ernest Thorley Loton in 1927. Grace's father was Christian Jorgensen or Jensen who later called himself Henry Smith. He was born in Norway and became prominent in Western Australia's timber industry on the south coast. Her mother was Matilda Hilda Mattner, daughter of Prussian parents. The parents met in South Australia and in 1889 moved to WA where Henry became mill manager at Millar Bros timber mill at Torbay and

Denmark and later at Mornington Mills near Harvey where Grace was born in 1899.

The newly-wed couple moved to the Loton estate at 'Belvoir' where they lived for 36 years. The property started as a dairy but then raised pedigree cattle and ultimately became well known for the many varieties of pedigree stud sheep that proved very profitable and were exhibited at many Royal Shows.

Grace was inaugural president of the Country Women's Association (CWA) Swan Branch in 1939 and remained in that position until 1950. She was also president of the Central Division 1948-1951, which at the time had 38 branches and approximately 1,620 members. In regular reports to the *Countrywoman* magazine she detailed her many visits with members, encouraging participation in projects and the CWA objectives. She was a great organiser and motivator. In 1951 she was appointed the CWA of WA representative on the WA Commonwealth Jubilee Committee. In her various roles with the CWA and with her husband's heavy involvement in WA agriculture, Grace also made an important contribution to many Royal Agricultural Shows. She was a Girl Guide Division Commissioner for the Swan-Darling Range Division between 1958 and 1966.

Bruce Hoar

Stories from the Storerooms Jessie's china



MA1900.296

This Staffordshire china marked with the 'Bouquet' pattern range made by William Brownfield was formerly the property of Mrs William Cruse, née Janet (Jessie) Dewar (1817-1888) of the Upper Swan and Guildford. Her husband William Connor Cruse (1802-1874) was the pioneer flour miller at 'Ellen's Brook Estate', a property on the Upper Swan that today we know as the historic 'Belhus Estate', and primarily associated with the Barrett-Lennard family who purchased it in 1897. Miss Alice Thompson presented the cup and saucer to the Society in 1929.

William Cruse arrived in 1830 on the *Nancy* as an indentured carpenter, a servant of the retired naval officer Lieutenant Henry Bull who was granted the land in the initial system of land grants and tenure instituted by the first European inhabitants of the Swan River Colony.

The property still has the two-storey, brick and shingle house, a mill race, mill pond and lime kiln and it is conjectured that this homestead may be the oldest extant settler residence in Western Australia with only the Round House in Fremantle an older building. They are both examples of technical achievement at a time of economic struggle in the new colony. As Bull's

carpenter, Cruse would have assisted in the building and we know that he operated the mill that was built in 1837.

Lieutenant Bull married in 1831 but Cruse, having to make his way in the world, did not marry until 1836 after which he built the mill. His bride was Janet (Jessie) Dewar. She had arrived on the *Warrior* in 1830 with her parents John and Mary Dewar who were servants of the wealthy Turner family and went with them to pioneer at Augusta. Here Jessie saw how wealthy people lived and may have worked as a maid for the Turner household until her parents left Augusta and came to the Swan River in 1832. They then set up on their own account as many other former servants were doing and became small farmers on the Upper Swan where Jessie met Cruse who was also setting up on his own account.

Many of the indentured servants – a term which covered anyone who were legally indentured to work for others – soon left employment if their employers had not enough coin to pay them, having ploughed all their money into bringing goods that entitled them to land grants. This meant industrious people with skill could soon become prosperous and landowning themselves.

We know little about William and Jessie Cruse's daily lives as both were illiterate and left no written reminiscences. However we know they prospered as he purchased land at Bullsbrook, taking up small parcels until they totalled 72.85 hectares and also held pastoral leases of 3,723 hectares, employing 26 ticket-of-leave workers between 1856 and 1873.

After thirty years of diligence, the Cruses retired to Guildford in 1860 where their orchard was well known for producing fine exhibits of oranges, lemons and pomalos. They gained a high reputation in their community, the *Inquirer and Commercial News* commenting in 1868 on 'Mr Cruse's kind and christian-like disposition ... his influence and assistance are things of daily offering among us all, rendered most unostentatiously, and, in many instances, I am aware, with no small amount of self-denial'. The comment is testimony to lives well lived.

We don't know where Jessie purchased the china that she passed on to Alice Thompson. However we do know it was probably made in the 1850s-1860s. We can imagine Jessie enjoying cups of tea from this cup when entertaining her friends and recalling the lives they had built with hard work in their new home.

Dr Dorothy Erickson

Early Days vols 1-12 for sale

One of our members has kindly donated a run of bound volumes of the journal in good condition for re-sale.

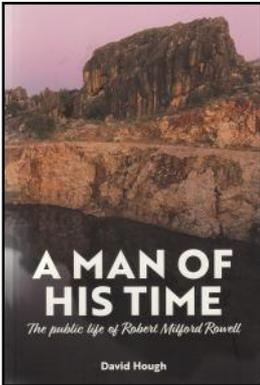
As part of our vital fund-raising efforts we offer the collection for sale at \$600.

Such an opportunity to purchase comes up only rarely, so seize the opportunity by phoning the Office on 9386 3841.

Book Reviews

David Hough, *A Man of his Time: The public life of Robert Mitford Rowell*, David Hough and Associates, 2018. In Library & Bookshop \$50.

Reviewer: Patrick Cornish



The Kimberley is some reach for most Western Australians – fortunately we have historians like David Hough to help us reach - and grasp – some of that extraordinary region’s heritage and enduring qualities.

Today our ‘Very Far North’ is easily accessible by car and plane. Visitors on cruise boats can see rocks, bays, waterfalls ... generally speaking, the bits that roads

cannot reach. When Robert Rowell first saw the Kimberley port of Derby more than 80 years ago, his arrival at that tropical frontier was by ship.

Rowell had trained as an accountant but during his three decades in the Kimberley he took on many roles, including business pioneer, justice of the peace, and community leader, not to mention husband, father and host of countless social events. Hough’s achievement, through not only painstaking research but also a gift for the telling anecdote, is to show much about the Kimberley through the lens of Robert Rowell’s life.

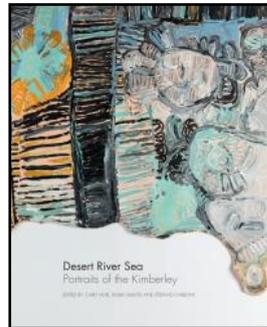
Robert and his wife, the former Ruth Robinson, were in Derby when war broke out in 1939. They were therefore soon to be among those much more in jeopardy from Japanese aircraft than were most people in WA. Any author can tell a Japanese horror story, but here’s a book with a heartening counterweight. When in 1942 Ruth, with other wives and children, were eventually ordered to board MV *Koolinda* for Fremantle, they worried about being bombed. However, they were safer than they knew. ‘In 1936 the crew had rescued 16 Japanese pearl fishermen,’ we read. The crew had been praised for their ‘brave, humanitarian effort, especially by the Japanese, who kept their promise.’ That is what I, as a writer, call a gem.

In later years Rowell became much involved in Kimberley politics, on the conservative side. Yet here’s another blow to stereotype: he spoke out in favour of Aboriginal land rights long before such consideration for the Kimberley’s first people was widely acceptable to white Australians at any latitude. Hough points out that Rowell’s ‘1971 landmark address on a policy for Aboriginal Australians to the State Women’s Council of the Liberal Party [was] ahead of its time’. He adds candidly that his subject’s behaviour on the issue did not always match his rhetoric.

Hough leaves the last word on the ‘modest man of sober habits’ to Katherine Gardner, a granddaughter who recalls his ‘deprecating sense of humour: he used to refer to his OBE as “Other Buggers” Efforts’.

Carly Lane, Emilia Galatis, Stefano Carboni (eds), *Desert River Sea: Portraits of the Kimberley*, UWA Publishing, 2019. 239pp. In Library & Bookshop \$50.

Reviewer: Rhuwina Griffiths



Books written about art can often soar into realms of obfuscation leaving the reader to wonder what it’s all about. Not so *Desert River Sea*. This book accompanied an exhibition of the same name that invited us to look at over 150 Aboriginal artworks from the Kimberley Region that were commissioned as part of a six-year project by the Art Gallery of WA.

The authors have adopted a light touch with the text using short stories from artists and art workers involved in the project. Many of them are written in the first-person. Here is Dora, from the Waringarri Aboriginal Arts Centre, telling us what makes their centre special:

We all work together as a community, bringing everyone together.... This place is also our safe space. People can feel good here ... we keep our culture strong by supporting the old people. It is here that we keep their stories alive.

Six art centres are featured in the book and reading about their role in keeping communities and culture strong and resilient is inspirational. As Emilia Galatis writes, ‘[Aboriginal] art centres are complicated, unwieldy, chaotic organisations that exist within some of Australia’s most logistically difficult places, yet they turn out some of the greatest contemporary art in the country.’ The art centres featured in this book are no exception.

As well as the art, photographers Bo Wong and Michael Jalaru Torres have captured images of many of the artists, the art centres where they work, and also the landscape that inspired so much creativity.

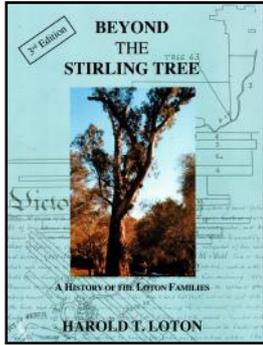
My personal favourite from the book is a collaborative effort from the Kira Kiro Art Centre entitled *Cultural Way 2013*. These 10 paintings are highly complex and combine many elements of culture and nature, inspired by the rich tradition of rock art paintings throughout the region.

Visual storytelling is tremendously powerful and, as you read this book, what stands out is how art is being used to nurture and grow vibrant and engaged communities. Many stories depicted in the art go back thousands of years but there are also new stories being created. It has been said that next to hunger and thirst, our most basic need is for storytelling (Khalil Gibran). Many of the artists in these remote communities are creating highly imaginative artworks that are amplifying complex stories and delivering relevant and powerful messages for us today.

This is a stunning and standout publication.

Harold Loton, *Beyond the Stirling Tree: A History of the Loton Families*, Hesperian Press, Carlisle, 2018. In Library & Bookshop \$15.

Reviewer: Bruce Hoar



The Lotons have been a prominent family in Western Australia for more than 150 years. Harold Loton's book commences with an insight into settlers' early life in the colony through the exceptional career of his great grandfather Sir William Thorley Loton who arrived in the 1860s and became a prominent businessman, politician and

great supporter of agricultural and pastoral development. The family properties 'Belvoir' in the Swan Valley and 'Springhill' in Northam figure prominently throughout the book. In particular there are detailed accounts of the life of four generations of Lotons at 'Belvoir', which remained in the family for nearly 90 years from 1876 to 1965. This followed the long tenure of pioneer family William and Eliza Shaw, owners of Belvoir from 1830. Harold's father Ernest was knighted for his contribution to agriculture in the State and his brother Brian Loton AC has been prominent in the mining industry over many years and was chairman of BHP in the 1990s.

In the last part of the book, Harold provides a detailed account of his life at school in the 1930s and 1940s, then as a farmer in Kojonup for thirty years and finally his love of travel to outback WA, and an account of his trip to Antarctica in late 1996.

New members' function

The Society thanks Christine Foulkes-Taylor and vice presidents Lennie McCall and Sally Anne Hasluck for introducing new members to the varied aspects of life at Stirling House on Wednesday morning 2 October. The tour included the reference library, museum, bookshop and archival products. Welcome to everyone who attended and to all new members. We look forward to getting to know you at some of the many events on offer at the Society.



Diary Dates

- Greenbushes Pemberton Northcliffe Coach Tour - November 14 15 16 17
- Remembrance Day Community Event - Mon 11 Nov
- Booked in for a Cuppa Xmas Edition - Fri 29 Nov
- Book Launch - *The Shentons* - Fri 22 Nov
- Christmas Garden Party - Wed 4 Dec

Community Officer: Lesley Burnett
Editor *History West*: Dr Lenore Layman
Copy editor: Heather Campbell

Opinions expressed in *History West* are not necessarily those of the Royal WA Historical Society (Inc.)

If you're a member who receives this newsletter in hard copy by post, and you're happy to receive it by email, please contact us 9386 3841 or admin@histwest.org.au with your email address, and save money and trees by receiving it online!